

GROUND BEEF

Here's how to keep things safe on the grill

Why Cook Ground Beef so Thoroughly?

Rare hamburgers are far riskier to your health than a rare steak.

If any pathogens are present on the outside of a whole piece of meat, like a steak, the high heat that sears and cooks the outside will destroy the dangerous bacteria. But when meat is ground up, any bacteria on the surface are mixed throughout the meat. Therefore, heat needs to get all the way into the middle of the burger to destroy these harmful bacteria.

The real concern here is a foodborne bacteria commonly known as E. coli. This bacteria and the illness it causes have been linked to the consumption of undercooked ground beef.

Don't let E. coli stay in your food — cook it out!

Safe Grilling:

When it comes to cooking meat, you can't always tell doneness by the color. The only way to be sure a ground beef patty is cooked to a high enough temperature (of at least 160°F) to destroy any harmful bacteria that may cause a foodborne illness is to use an accurate instant-read thermometer.

Here's exactly how to do it...

- For ground meat patties, insert the thermometer at least ½ inch into the thickest part of the patty.
- If the burger is not thick enough to check from the top, the thermometer should be inserted sideways.
- If you're not sure if you got into the center, you can take a second reading in a different part of the burger.

